



# JUSTICE AND CONSUMERS

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## FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

# Combating Antisemitism

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23 January 2017

## International Holocaust Remembrance Day 2017

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the Wannsee conference, where with cold, bureaucratic precision, plans were laid out by the Nazi leadership to exterminate European Jews.

To mark the International Holocaust Remembrance Day 2017 please find [here](#) a

To mark the International Holocaust Remembrance Day 2017, please find [here](#) a message by European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker.

Yet, Holocaust deniers continue to have an audience. The so-called "hard" Holocaust denial is criminalized by law. This includes denying that the Holocaust ever happened, that Auschwitz existed or as **European legislation** states "publicly condoning, denying or grossly trivialising crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes".

But what is often called "soft" Holocaust denial is much more difficult to unmask. Soft Holocaust denial accuses the Jews as a people of exaggerating the Shoah, it questions the relevance of the Holocaust for today's world, it attempts to belittle the Holocaust by pointing to other situations.

To underline the need to fight all forms of Holocaust denial the European Commission in cooperation with the European Jewish Congress and the US Holocaust Memorial Museum screened, on 26 January the film **Denial** and **First Vice-President Timmermans** discussed the dangers of Holocaust denial with the protagonist of the film, Professor Deborah Lipstadt.

Antisemitism today appears in many forms and is not always easy to unmask. In May 2016 the **International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance** adopted by unanimity a **definition of Antisemitism** as a useful legally non-binding tool.

Understanding the implications of the Holocaust is essential to unmask Antisemitism. **Commissioner Věra Jourová** spoke about the issue at a conference on 24th January.

The European Commission marks the occasion for its staff with an exhibition which

Commissioner Jourová will open on 30 January and a staff training on the role of civil servants in bringing about the Holocaust.

The European Union is the very product of learning from history, and Remembrance and memory stand at its core. This past year several survivors of the Holocaust passed away, among them Nobel Prize Winner Elie Wiesel. He insisted that "Memory has become a sacred duty of all people of goodwill". As the survivors pass away we must become the carriers of their messages.

Of particular worry is rising illegal hate speech on social media and the internet. We have seen how quickly hate speech can tilt into hate crime. The European Commission therefore concluded with Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Microsoft on 26 May 2016 a **code of conduct** to review the majority of valid notifications of illegal hate speech in less than 24 hours and remove or disable access to such content. The recently created **High-level Member States expert group on Racism, Xenophobia and other forms of intolerance** aims at improving further the fight against Antisemitism and other forms of hatred across Europe.



Full house at a debate with Professor Deborah Lipstadt and First Vice-President **Frans Timmermans** following the screening of the film "**Denial**", 26 January 2017.



Commissioner Věra Jourová speaks at the occasion of the International Holocaust Remembrance Day 2017.

Read the full speech [here](#)

EU Commission Coordinator on combating Antisemitism Katharina von Schnurbein in a TV discussion from the European Parliament premises on Holocaust Remembrance and the fight against Antisemitism. Watch the debate [here](#).



**Speech** of Frans Timmermans, First Vice-President of the European Commission, at the Inauguration of Rabbi Cohen, Maastricht, 22 January 2017.



Listen to a **podcast** by **Katharina von**




**Schnurbein**, Coordinator on combating Antisemitism in cooperation with the **US Holocaust Memorial Museum** on the situation of Antisemitism in Europe today and actions taken by the European Commission to fight it. (Photo: Karl Gabor, Stockholm)




**Joint Statement** on the occasion of the **10th EU - Israel Seminar on Combating Racism, Xenophobia and Antisemitism**, 13 and 14 December 2016, Jerusalem.





**Message**  **(50 kB)** from First Vice-President Frans Timmermans to the Jewish Community in Europe, on the occasion of Rosh-Hashana, 30 September 2016.




**Speech**  **(98 kB)** of First Vice-President Frans Timmermans at the International Parliamentary Conference on Combating Antisemitism, 14 March 2016, Berlin

The European Commission organised on 27 January 2016 several **actions** to commemorate the Holocaust: in particular, a training seminar for officials from all EU institutions focused on Fundamental Rights and Holocaust remembrance, closed by Věra Jourová, Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality.

On the occasion of Holocaust Remembrance Day 2016, the Permanent Delegation of the European Union to the Office of the United Nations in Geneva organised - among other **initiatives** - a photo **exhibition** named "**The Family Camp**  ", in collaboration with the Permanent Missions of the Czech Republic and Poland and curated by the **Terezin Memorial** Museum.

**Message by President Jean-Claude Juncker**  (**43 kB**) to the Jewish community on the occasion of Holocaust Remembrance Day 2016.

The European Commission appoints Ms Katharina von Schnurbein as **Coordinator on combating antisemitism**, 1 December 2015.

**Article by First Vice-President Timmermans and Věra Jourová**  (**298 kB**), Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality: Fighting antisemitism and safeguarding European values, 10 July 2015

**Closing remarks of First Vice-President Timmermans** at the LIBE hearing on antisemitism, Islamophobia and hate speech, European Parliament, 29 June 2015

**First Vice-President Timmermans' speech "Freedom. So what?"** at the Willem Arondéus lecture, 11 June 2015

**Speech of Věra Jourová**, Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender



Equality: Tackling hate speech and antisemitism, 11 May 2015

**Speech of Věra Jourová**, Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender

Equality: Combating antisemitism, a defining moment for Europe, 5 May 2015

Extract from **First Vice-President Timmermans' remarks** at the press conference, General Affairs Council, Luxembourg, 21 April 2015

**Speech of First Vice-President Timmermans** at the Dutch Buchenwald commemoration (transcript), 11 April 2015

**Address of First Vice-President Timmermans** at the memorial ceremony for the victims of the Paris terror attacks, Brussels, 21 January 2015

**Speech of Romano Prodi**, former President of the European Commission, at the Seminar on Europe - Against Antisemitism, for a Union of Diversity, Brussels, 19 February 2004

## Data collection

**Discrimination and hate crime against Jews in EU Member States:**

**experiences and perceptions of antisemitism**, November 2013. This FRA survey is the first-ever to collect comparable data on Jewish people's experiences and perceptions of antisemitism, hate-motivated crime and discrimination across a number of EU Member States, specifically in Belgium, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Its findings reveal a worrying level of discrimination, particularly in employment and education, a widespread fear of victimisation and

heightening concern about antisemitism online.

## European Commission – Israel seminars on racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism

**7th Seminar with Israel on the fight against antisemitism, racism and xenophobia**, Brussels, 16 December 2013

**8th Seminar with Israel on the fight against antisemitism, racism and xenophobia**, Jerusalem, 27 October 2014

**9th Seminar with Israel on the fight against antisemitism, racism and xenophobia**, Brussels, 17 December 2015

**10th Seminar with Israel on the fight against antisemitism, racism and xenophobia**, Jerusalem, 13 and 14 December 2016

## Annual Fundamental Rights Colloquium

**Tolerance and respect: preventing and combating antisemitic and anti-Muslim hatred in Europe**, Brussels, 1-2 October 2015



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